UNITED STATES GU. ERNMENT

emorandum

Mr. Bishop

DATE: March 17, 1969

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FROM :

TO

M. A. Jones

SUBJECT:

JAMES EARL RAY

Senator James O. Eastland (D - Miss.) last week indicated the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security which he chairs was going to look into the Ray case, in an effort to develop information concerning a possible conspiracy in the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On 3/17/69, Senator Eastland telephonically advised Special Agent which he had that date received a letter from Ray in which Ray says he did not kill King and offers to cooperate with the Senate Subcommittee. The Senator made available the enclosed copy of the letter which is dated 3/14/69, and the envelope in which it was mailed.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That this be referred to the General Investigative

Division.

Enclosures

Mr. DeLoach (enclosure)
Mr. Bishop (enclosure)
Mr. Rosen (enclosure)

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## Dear Senator Eastland;

I read in the local newspaper where your committee is considering investagating the Dr. King case. I would like to inform you and the committee that I would cooperate in any such hearing. However, at the time I am going to attempt to get the guilty plea set aside, I know that the odds against having this done are greatly against me. But I think due to the unusual circumstances in the guilty plea it mite be possible. I personaly did not shoot Dr. King but I believe I am partly responsible for his death. I will briefly attempt to explain why I entered the guilty plea. At the time Mr. Pery Foreman aggred to take over the defense from Mr. Arthur Hanes we had a verbal agreement that their would be no guilty plea, as I wanted to try the case in court. I had every reason to believe during the first two months Mr. Foreman was on the case their would be a trial, during that period Mr. Foreman had me sign a new contract with him and Mr. Huie giving Mr. Foreman all the money from any of Mr. Huie's money making ventures. (I had sign another contract with Mr. Huie and Mr. Hanes) Shortly after this Mr. Foreman came to visit me and he had a picture for me to look at. This picture was about 8 x 10 in. Mr. Foreman said Mr. Huie had given him the picture and that Mr. Huie had got the picture from someone in the federal government. The picture contain 2 or 3 men followed by two or 3 policemen. Mr. Foreman described on of the men in the picture as an 'anti communist' cuban refugee who was arrested at the time president Kennedy was shot. "The arrest took place in Dallas I was told" I was asked if I would identify the man if he was brought to Memphis. I said no, althoe he did look similar to the person I was involved with. After I wouldn't identify this man, about all I was told was that I would go to the electric chair if I went to trial. I was even told my family wanted me to plead guilty, but I found out this was not so. But I did not plead guilty for the above reasons. I did so because I did not want to go to trial with a lawyer who thought he was going to lose. I believe if you think you will lose you proably will. On the day before I plead guilty I signed another contract with Mr. Foreman. In this one I agreed to give him \$165,000, he agreed to give my brother \$500.00 in the event I wanted to hire another lawyer to reopen the case. Mr. Foreman wrote into the contract that if I embarres him (disagreed) in the court room he could withdraw, the old contract would go into effect and I would be without funds to hire another

attorney. Getting back to Mr. Huie for a minute, while Mr. Hanes was my attorney Mr. Huie asked me through him about public figures and various organizations. I got the impression that he thought their was a conspiracy but he wanted to name the conspirators. And I sometime felt that my attorneys were working for him instead of for me. In closing I would like to say if I can't get the case reopen, their should be an invegestion, as I have signed over \$200,000 to attorneys and not 1/20 of the witnesses have been interview. No one went to Los Angeles or New Orleans where I think much of the evidence lies. Mr. Foreman said in open court that he didn't trust investigators, and the one Mr. Hanes hired never left Memphis. I would also like to say that despite what the papers and book writer's quote me as saying, I have no intention of discussing this case with anyone 'verbaly' until it is closed. If I have anything to say I will say it in court or to lawyers, or in letter form like this letter.

Sincerely, James E. Ray.

COPY:mls

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3-14-64 Plear Suntan Eather? read in the love nouspeper when your committee. considering sincestageting. The Dr. Hung cone. lite to inform you and the committee that I trended conspender in any such hering, Housing, at the time 2 on going to delingt 15 get the guilty plus set ander 2 how that The office against bring the done are greatly against me, But 2 this due to the onescal chainstine in the guilt play it mite be presible, I personly did not short Dr. Hing but I believe I am gritty responsible for his directo. I will briefly attings to explain why I entered the quild Pice. at The time This your round of goul to toke aunthe service from mar. aither House we Pod a reabel a green is -this would be no quilty play as I would to Fis \_\_\_\_\_ Two with my Down we on the care there would be a trick, diving that percent Mu. However but me - new contract with his and Mr. Huil guing Tin From (I had sign anothe content-with mer. Hair and mer. Honen) Shorthy ofter this man Forum come to quit me and he find a putice for me to lack at This picture wo about SXICIN. The Foren seid me Huis Ind guen Air the picture out that my Huie had got the future from someone in the felul gouernost. The picture contran 2 or 3 inea fillead by two or 3 pelismen. Mr. Foremalicited - on of the men spi the putie as on ante commint cutor - style who was anested at the Time president Hearing wine

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